

and purpose. It measures about 50 feet by 35 at its foot. The sun-dried bricks are of the large size of $22-24" \times 12" \times 4"$. At a distance of from 50 to 70 feet from its foot the remains can be traced of a massive enclosure of roughly oval shape, about 10 to 11 feet thick and built of bricks about $20" \times 12" \times 3"$ in size. It has been almost effaced to the NW. and W., apparently through wind-erosion, but on the south it still stands to a height of over 13 feet.

The size of the bricks alone would suffice to prove that the attribution of great age to this ruin, as indicated by its popular designation, is justified. But what invests it with special interest is the evidence afforded by potsherds lying on the bare wind-eroded surface of the slopes that the mound was already occupied in prehistoric times. As shown by the specimens described in the List of section iii below, there were found among these pottery fragments numerous pieces of painted 'chalcolithic' ware (see Akh. 09, 11-13, 15-18), which, in view of abundant finds of the same kind on wind-eroded mounds farther south, must be ascribed to a period long antecedent to the earliest historical times in Sīstān. The fragments of stone vessels (Akh. 01-2, 19, 23) are characteristic associates of the same ceramic ware.

Prehistoric
occupation
of mound.

There is every reason to assume that this conspicuous mound, rising well above the level of possible inundation from the Hāmūn and affording a distant view across the whole basin, was also occupied during historical times at a far earlier period than the ruins at and around Hauzdār. To these times we may confidently ascribe the numerous fragments also found there of superior pottery, plain, decorated, or glazed, closely resembling those common at Ghāgha-shahr and Shahrīstān, of which Akh. 03-7, 10, 14 (Pl. CXV) are specimens. Regularly 'ribbed' pieces, like Akh. 08, were also seen in plenty. The present elevation of the natural mound above the absolutely flat ground outside is about 12 feet. The difference between this and the height of 20 to 25 feet, which the mounds covered with prehistoric pottery debris at Shahr-i-Sōkhta and in the desert to the south usually attain, is easily accounted for by the fact that the ground around Hauzdār, having been irrigated for prolonged periods, must have been considerably raised through the accumulation of silt, due to the heavy mud carried by the Helmand at flood time.

Early
pottery
remains.

About $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles farther to the south-west a curious enclosure is found, known as *Pai-kash-i-Rustam* and believed, as the name shows, to mark the footprint left by Rustam's famous horse Rakhsh. It consists, as seen in the sketch-plan, Pl. 57, of an irregularly shaped interior, about 100 yards across where widest, surrounded by a rampart, rising about 20 feet above the flat ground. This rampart varies from 40 to 80 feet in thickness and consists, as close inspection of the steep slope towards the interior showed, of the hard natural clay which underlies the gravel surface of the Dasht and is known locally as *sir* or *kim*. The interior space is quite bare and its floor covered with *shōr*. This is easily accounted for by the fact that in years of ample flood in the Helmand inundation from the Hāmūn reaches the outer foot of the rampart, as shown by the deposit of broken reeds left there. The only explanation of this strange enclosure that occurred to me is that an isolated clay terrace, such as are found in many places near the edges of the Dasht plateau, was by excavation of the interior converted into a natural circumvallation intended to offer shelter. But I realize that the width of the gap to the NE., fully 70 feet across, which seems to have served as entrance, is in this case difficult to account for. Could the enclosure possibly have been intended for use as a kind of corral or Dakhma?

Enclosure of
Pai-kash-i-
Rustam.

The question thus raised was not solved by the small massively built rotunda found at a distance of only 6 yards or so from the foot of the rampart on the NE. (Fig. 491). Its wall, 6 feet thick, is built of strong bricks measuring $17-18" \times 8-9" \times 2\frac{1}{2}"$. Its interior, $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter, was once surmounted by a dome springing from a plinth at a height of about 11 feet above the present ground level outside. What remains of it shows that the vaulting was of the 'horizontal'

Ruined
rotunda
outside
enclosure.